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SUBJECT: "WARTIME FRUIT CANNING." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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As you may remember--just a week ago today I brought you some news about sugar for canning. Today--I'm bringing you more information along this same line--information from Dr. Louise Stanley, chief of the home economists in the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

I'm passing on to you some of Doctor Stanley's suggestions for saving sugar when you can cherries and berries.

But before I get on with cherry and berry canning let me quote what Doctor Stanley has to say in general about the use of your canning sugar ration.

"Stretch your ration of canning sugar to the limit," she advises. "For the special sugar allowed for canning fruit has been issued to you in trust--so that you may help keep good food from going to waste. But remember, sugar supplies still are limited. And sugar still is being brought to the United States at great risk to the lives of many of our countrymen."

That's the main reason for making your sugar canning ration stretch as far as it will. Here's how to do it with cherries and berries.

The best way to save canning sugar is to pack cherries and berries hot. That way you can sweeten the fruit slightly, then heat it, and draw out the juice from the fruit itself. In many cases you won't have to can any added water. If you pack the fruit cold--on the other hand--you have to use a sugar-and-water sirup. And naturally it takes more sugar to make a sirup than to merely sweeten the juice.

If you are going to can cherries and berries in their own juice--the first thing to do is to get the juice.

To draw out the juices of the cherries or the berries--sweeten the fruit slightly--then heat it very slowly--just to the boiling point. Be sure to watch the fruit and stir it occasionally so the fruit doesn't scorch. Then fill the jars piping hot with the fruit and juice--and make sure there is enough juice to cover the fruit.

Or--here's another way. Suppose you are canning blackberries--and you have some very ripe ones--and some that are less ripe. If so, you'll probably want to separate the riper blackberries--heat them--and extract juice from them. Then you can precook the uncrushed whole blackberries in this juice--fill the jars--and process as usual. Cooked this way the berries will keep their shape better for dessert purposes.

If by any chance you don't have enough juice to make up enough liquid to cover the fruit well--you'll want to use a little sirup to finish up. Such a sirup will take at least 1 cup of sugar to a quart of water. Naturally, if you want a sweeter sirup, you'll have to put in more sugar. For especially delicate berries that you put up for eating for dessert just as they come from the jar you may want to use more of your canning allowance than for those that you can for use in pies where shape isn't important.

As you know, cherries may be canned pitted--or unpitted, depending upon the way you want to use them. But if you can the cherries with their pits removed--be sure to save every bit of the juice that comes from them. You'll need to precook cherries about 5 minutes. Just simmer them over low heat and pack them hot. Cover them with boiling hot juice. Cook sugar with the cherries when you pre-heat them--or can them without sugar--just as you like.

I've been pointing out to you Doctor Stanley's suggestions for packing fruit hot--to save containers. But as you may know--there are a couple of other good reasons for packing fruit hot into jars.

One other reason for packing fruit hot into containers is that way you make more economical use of jar space--and rubbers--and tops. For not only do we have to save sugar this season but home canners are more limited as to containers.

The other thing you accomplish when you pack fruit hot into containers is this--you cut down on the length of time you have to keep the packed container in a water bath to kill the bacteria that may cause spoilage.

For example, here's how much difference it makes with berries.

Quart jars of berries packed raw and covered with hot sirup need 20 minutes processing in a water bath. But a jar that same size--one quart--takes only 5 minutes processing if the berries have been pre-cooked.

That's all the sugar-saving canning news I have today from the Bureau of Home Economics of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Just one final word from Doctor Stanley.

"Keep in mind that sugar is not needed in canning to keep food from spoiling. But it does help fruit hold its color and flavor." So use your canning allowance accordingly.

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